JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

Case 2:19-cv-06091-MMB Document 1 Filed 12/24/19 Page 1 of 13 CIVIL COVER SHEET CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

L (a) PLAINTIFFS Renat Albekov				MRS BPO, LL	TS	·				
(b) County of Residence (E.	of First Listed Plaintiff	Philadelphia County (SES)		County of Resid NOTE: IN LAN THE TR		(IN U.S.	PLAINTIFE CAS		IOF	
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Kalikhman & Rayz, LLC 1051 County Line Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 1	Suite "A"			Attorneys (If Kn	own)					
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	CTION (Place an "X" in O	ne Box Only)	III. CI	TIZENSHIP O	F PI	RINCIP	AL PARTI	ES (Place an "X" i	n One Box	for Plaintif
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VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE Hon Mieh	ael Bayl	son	-	DOCK	ET NUMBER	2:19-cv-01197	7-MMB	
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

19 609

DESIGNATION FORM the category of the case for the purpose of assign

lress of Plaintiff:	C/O Naiikiinian & Nayz,		A OI		vaney,	
	c/o Kalikhman & Rayz,	LLC 1051	County Line Road	Suite A Huntingdon	Valley, PA	19006
	sea by counsei or pro se piainiij) io in					

Address of Plaintiff:		L N L 00002				
Address of Defendant: 1930 Olney Avenue Cherry Hill, NJ 08003						
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: Philadelphia County						
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RELATED CASE, IF ANY: Case Number: 2:19-cv-01197-MME	Tudge: Hon, Michael Báylson					
Case Number: 2.19-CV-U1197-IVIIVIE	Judge: Holl Wilchael Bayison	Date Terminated:				
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answ	ered to any of the following questions:					
 Is this case related to property included in a previously terminated action in this court? 	n earlier numbered suit pending or within one year	Yes No				
Does this case involve the same issue of fac- pending or within one year previously term	Yes No					
Does this case involve the validity or infrin numbered case pending or within one year	gement of a patent already in suit or any earlier previously terminated action of this court?	Yes No				
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas case filed by the same individual?	orpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights	. Yes No				
this court except as noted above.	■ is / □ is not related to any case now pending or					
DATE: 12/11/2019	M	87976				
	Attorney-at-Law Pro Se Plaintiff	Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)				
CIVIL: (Place a √ in one category only)						
A. Federal Question Cases:	B. Diversity Jurisdiction	Cases:				
1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, 2. FELA 3. Jones Act-Personal Injury 4. Antitrust 5. Patent 6. Labor-Management Relations 7. Civil Rights 8. Habeas Corpus 9. Securities Act(s) Cases 10. Social Security Review Cases 11. All other Federal Question Cases (Please specify): 15 U.S	2. Airplane Person 3. Assault, Defan 4. Marine Person 5. Motor Vehicle	nation al Injury Personal Injury Injury (Please specify): lity Lity — Asbestos sity Cases				
	ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION					
(The	effect of this certification is to remove the case from eligibility	y for arbitration.) · ·-				
Ĭ,	, counsel of record or pro se plaintiff, do hereby certify:					
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3 exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclusion.	(c) (2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the ive of interest and costs:	damages recoverable in this civil action case				
Relief other than monetary damages is	sought.	•				
DATE:						
NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if the	Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff here has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.	Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)				



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

Albekov

CIVIL ACTION 609

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v.

MRS BPO, LLC

NO.

In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for plaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of filing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track to which that defendant believes the case should be assigned.

SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CASE MANAGEMENT TRACKS:

Te	ephone FAX Number E-Mail Address					
_(215) 364-5030 (215) 364-5029 erayz@kalraylaw.com					
Da	e Attorney-at-law Attorney for					
	12/11/2019 Plaintiff					
(f)	Standard Management – Cases that do not fall into any one of the other tracks.	()				
(e)	Special Management – Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.)	()				
` '	Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos.	()				
(c)	c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2.					
(b)) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits.					
(a)	Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255.					

(Civ. 660) 10/02

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

RENAT ALBEKOV,

Plaintiff(s)

٧.

MRS BPO, LLC d/b/a MRS Associates; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive,

Defendant(s)

CIVIL ACTION COMPLAINT

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6081

Civil Action No.

Jury Trial Demanded

Renat Albekov ("Plaintiff"), alleges as follows:

I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

- 1. This is an action for damages brought by a consumer pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("FDCPA"), 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq.
- 2. In effectuating the FDCPA, Congress sought to limit the tactics a debt collector could use. Despite these plain truths, Defendant (defined herein) used inappropriate tactics to collect Plaintiff's debt.
- 3. Upon information and belief, Defendant used these very same tactics across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania against hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals who, fall within the ambit of the protections of the FDCPA.
 - 4. Absent this action, Defendant's inappropriate tactics would continue unabated.

II. THE PARTIES

- 5. Plaintiff is an adult individual, who is currently a resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
 - 6. Plaintiff is a "consumer," as that term is defined and/or contemplated within the

scope of FDCPA.

- 7. Defendant MRS BPO, LLC d/b/a MRS Associates ("Defendant") is a business entity, organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey, that regularly conducts business in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and is engaged in the business of debt collection within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from its principal place at 1930 Olney Ave., Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.
- 8. Indeed, on its own website, <u>www.mrsbpo.com</u>, Defendant provides the following description of itself;



See https://www.mrsbpo.com/home.html, last visited on March 20, 2019.

9. Plaintiff is unaware of the names and capacities of those defendants sued as DOES 1 through 10, but will seek leave to amend this complaint once their identities become known to Plaintiff. Upon information and belief, Plaintiff alleges that at all relevant times each defendant, including the DOE defendants 1 through 10, was the officer, director, employee, agent, representative, alter ego, or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants, and in engaging in the conduct alleged herein was in the course and scope of and in furtherance of such relationship.

- 10. Unless otherwise specified, Plaintiff will refer to all defendants collectively as "Defendant" and each allegation pertains to each Defendant.
- 11. Defendant is a "debt collector," as that term is defined and/or contemplated within the scope of FDCPA.
- 12. Defendant uses instrumentalities of interstate commerce and mail in a business, whose principal purpose is collection of debts and/or regularly collects (or attempts to collect), directly or indirectly, debts owed or due or asserted to be owed or due another.
- 13. At all times material hereto, Defendant acted and/or failed to act in person and/or through duly authorized agents, servants, workmen, and/or employees, acting within the scope and course of their authority and/or employment for and/or on behalf of Defendant.

III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 14. This Honorable Court has jurisdiction pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k and 28 U.S.C. § 1337.
 - 15. The Eastern District of Pennsylvania is the proper venue for this litigation, because:
 - a. Plaintiff resides in Philadelphia County, which is in the territory of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania;
 - b. Defendant's wrongful conduct was directed to and was undertaken within the territory of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; and
 - c. Defendant conducts a substantial portion of its business in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

IV. STATEMENT OF CLAIMS

A. BACKGROUND

16. On or about January 5, 2019, Defendant sent a letter to Plaintiff, seeking to collect

a balance of \$5,056.93, incurred on a personal credit card for personal and household expenses. A true and correct copy of this document is marked and attached hereto as Exhibit "A."

- 17. The letter at issue was the first letter Defendant sent to Plaintiff regarding this alleged debt.
 - 18. Plaintiff read the letter and did not believe that the amount was accurate.
 - 19. Therefore, he wanted to dispute the debt, but was unsure as to how to proceed.
- 20. The FDCPA requires a mandatory initial notice to the consumer to serve as an informal dispute mechanism. See 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.
- 21. Therefore, Defendant was required to include in the letter at issue a notice, which states, *inter alia*, that if Plaintiff disputes the debt or any part thereof, he must notify Defendant of this dispute in writing.
- 22. This is significant, because only a written dispute triggers Defendant's obligation to provide Plaintiff with a verification of the debt. See Graziano v. Harrison, 950 F.2d 107, 112 (3rd Cir. 1991)(explaining that, for purposes of Section 1692g, "any dispute, to be effective, must be in writing. . . .")(emphasis supplied).
- 23. Thus, in the Third Circuit, a debt collector's written disclosure must convey the requirement that a consumer must dispute a debt in writing under 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.
- 24. Further, as held by the Third Circuit, "in order to comply with the requirements of § 1692g, more is required than the mere inclusion of the statutory debt validation notice in the debt collection letter the required notice must also be conveyed effectively to the debtor." Wilson v. Quadramed Corp., 225 F.3d 350, 354 (3rd Cir. 2000).
- 25. A debt collector, therefore, violates the FDCPA when the requisite notice is "overshadowed" or "contradicted by other portions of the communication." <u>Graziano</u>, 950 F.2d

at 111; Wilson, 225 F.3d at 354.

- 26. The letter at issue begins with a request that Plaintiff seek to resolve the debt at issue by providing various settlement options.
- 27. The letter then invites Plaintiff to call Defendant, because "[p]ayment may be made by calling 800-949-6794." Exhibit "A."
- 28. The practical effect of this request to call Defendant is to discourage consumers from disputing their debts in writing.
 - 29. Immediately below that statement, Defendant's letter continues with the following:

Unless you notify this office within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of the debt or any portion thereof, this office will assume this debt is valid. If you notify this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of this debt or any portion thereof, this office will obtain verification of the debt or obtain a copy of a judgment and mail you a copy of such judgment or verification. If you request of this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice, this office will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

- 30. The above statement does not specify that the dispute must be in writing.
- 31. Moreover, this statement, when construed with the sentences inviting the consumer to call Defendant, creates a "reasonable probability that the least sophisticated debtor . . . would be induced to overlook his statutory right to dispute the debt." <u>Graziano</u>, 950 F.2d at 111.
- 32. A consumer reading this language could reasonably believe that a phone call would be sufficient to preclude Defendant from assuming the debt to be valid.
- 33. As described herein, Defendant's actions violated the applicable provisions of the FDCPA, in that, Defendant's letter fails to effectively provide Plaintiff with the statutory notice, required by Section 1692g, by "overshadowing" the required notice.
- 34. Defendant's conduct, as alleged herein, is (and was) deliberate, intentional, reckless, willful, and wanton.
- 35. Defendant's conduct, as alleged herein, is unfair, misleading, deceptive, and unconscionable.

- 36. Plaintiff has been (and will continue to be) financially damaged due to Defendant's conduct, as set forth herein.
- 37. Plaintiff has suffered and will continue to suffer actual damages due to Defendant's conduct, as set forth herein.
- 38. As such, Plaintiff avers that Defendant's conduct, as described herein, was not limited to the circumstances described herein, but was, and is, habitual, systematic, ongoing, and unrelenting in Defendant's business model and practice.
- 39. Plaintiff avers that the purpose of Defendant's behavior described herein (as well as their day-to-day business operation), is to deceive unsuspecting consumers, wherever and whenever possible, to achieve, *inter alia*, the objectives of obtaining additional revenue and profit for Defendant's business enterprise.
- 40. Plaintiff avers that Defendant has utilized various methods calculated to confuse, mislead, distract, coerce, and convert consumers' funds for Defendant's benefit, by employing unethical business practices to secure pure financial gain and unjust financial enrichment.
- 41. Plaintiff further states that Defendant's practices continue unabated, and will continue well beyond the end of this case, for which Defendants have and/or will reap hundreds of thousands of dollars in unearned ill-gotten gains from unsuspecting consumers.
- 42. Irrespective of Plaintiff's actions, the aforementioned correspondence sent by Defendant to Plaintiff was false, misleading, and, at a minimum, in violation of the FDCPA.

COUNT I FDCPA 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e and 1692g

43. Plaintiff hereby incorporates all facts and allegations of this document by reference, as if fully set forth at length herein.

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- 44. As described herein, Defendant's failure to provide a timely and proper statutory notice of the initial communication is a *per se* violation of the FDCPA. See <u>Janetos v. Fulton</u> Friedman & Gullace, LLP, 825 F.3d 317, 324 (7th Cir. 2016)(explaining that the courts "have not extended the implicit materiality requirements of §1692e to reach claims under §1692g(a)...").
- 45. As described herein, Defendant's letter does not comply with the FDCPA, because it creates the false impression that an oral dispute of the debt under Section 1692g is just as effective as the one made "in writing."
- 46. Defendant's letter, therefore, is misleading, because it implies that the writing requirement for an effective dispute under Section 1692g is voluntary or optional. See Desantis v. Computer Credit, Inc., 269 F.3d 159, 161 (2nd Cir. 2001)(explaining that a "debt collector violates the [FDCPA] if it fails to convey the information required by the [FDCPA]...").
- 47. Defendant's letter is also misleading, because it fails to advise a consumer of the proper method for exercising his or her rights to dispute the debt and seek its validation.
- 48. Therefore, Defendant's actions with respect to its collection efforts violated, *inter alia*, 15 U.S.C. § 1692e and 15 U.S.C. § 1692g. See Guzman v. HOVG, LLC, et al., 340 F.Supp.3d 526 (E.D.Pa. 2018); see also Henry v. Radius Global Solutions, LLC, et al., 2019 WL 266316 (E.D.Pa. 2019); Durnell v. Stoneleigh Recovery Associates, LLC, 2019 WL121197 (E.D.Pa. 2019).
- 49. As a result of Defendant's violations of the FDCPA, Plaintiff has suffered damages in an amount to be determined at trial.

V. CLAIM FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays for:

(a) A Declaration that Defendant has violated the applicable provisions of the

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FDCPA;

- (b) An Order enjoining Defendant from any further violations of the FDCPA;
- (c) Actual damages;
- (d) Statutory damages;
- (e) Attorneys' fees and costs; and
- (f) Such other relief as the Honorable Court shall deem just and appropriate.

VI. <u>DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL</u>

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury as to all issues so triable.

Dated: December 11, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

KALIKHMAN & RAYZ, LLC

Arkady "Eric" Rayz

1051 County Line Road, Suite "A"

Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Telephone: (215) 364-5030 Facsimile: (215) 364-5029

E-mail: erayz@kalraylaw.com

Counsel for Plaintiff and the Class

Case 2:19-cv-06091-MMB Document 1 Filed 12/24/19



S-SFMRSA11 P9FM8T00208887 - 567302027 I17774 Return Address: MRS BPO, L.L.C. 1930 OLNEY AVENUE CHERRY HILL NJ 08003

MRS BPO, L.L.C. 1930 OLNEY AVENUE CHERRY HILL NJ 08003 800-949-6794

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am - 9pm ET

Friday 9am - 5pm ET



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January 5, 2019

CREDITOR: CHASE BANK USA N.A. CREDITOR ACCT#: MRS ACCT#: ACCOUNT BALANCE: \$5,056.93

Dear RENAT ALBEKOV,

The above referenced creditor has placed your account with our office for collection. We recognize that sometimes circumstances or events can make it difficult to satisfy your financial obligations. Resolving an overdue debt is never easy. Often the hardest part is taking the first step. We are ready to assist you to find a solution that is both fair and reasonable by presenting two options that will enable you to resolve your balance with CHASE BANK USA N.A.. We are not obligated to renew these offers.

Option 1: A monthly payment plan to pay the full balance of the account.

Option 2: You are eligible for a discount offer of \$3,034.21. You pay only \$3,034.21 in 1 PAYMENT that must be received in this office on or before 02/21/2019.

Payment may be made by calling 800-949-6794, mailing to the above address, or by using our online website at https://mrspay.webview.com. Make payments payable to CHASE BANK USA N.A.

Please contact us if you have any questions, wish to discuss other arrangements, or need additional time to respond to these offers. These offers do not affect your rights set forth below.

Unless you notify this office within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of the debt or any portion thereof, this office will assume this debt is valid. If you notify this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of this debt or any portion thereof, this office will obtain verification of the debt or obtain a copy of a judgment and mail you a copy of such judgment or verification. If you request of this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice, this office will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

MRS BPO, LL.C. 800-949-6794

This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. This communication is from a debt collector.

001CHSFPA